



MARKET HARBOROUGH
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

Health and Sanitary State of
the District for the year

1948

BY

S. P. STOKER, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

B. G. ELLIOTT, M.R.San.I.,

SANITARY INSPECTOR.



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ANNUAL REPORT
of the Medical Officer of Health and the
Sanitary Inspector for 1948.

GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to present our Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1948.

STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	4,771
Population (Registrar General's Estimate) ...	10,340
Number of inhabited houses	3,108
Rateable Value	£65,524
Sum represented by penny rate	£260

INDUSTRIES.

Full employment has been maintained by all the industries in the town and in one case a considerable amount of the work by female labour has been done in their homes. Export still claims a large proportion of the output. No new industries have been started.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Male.	Female.	Total
Live Births : Legitimate	77	90	167
Illegitimate	5	5	10
	—	—	—
	82	95	177
	—	—	—
Still Births : Legitimate	—	5	5
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	—	5	5
	—	—	—
Deaths of infants			
under 1 year : Legitimate	2	3	5
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	2	3	5
	—	—	—
Deaths (all ages)	51	58	109
	—	—	—

	1948.	1947.	England and Wales. 1948.
Live Birth Rate (Per 1,000 population) :	17.12	17.38	17.9
Still Birth Rate („ „ „) :	0.47	0.48	0.42
Death Rate („ „ „) :	10.44	10.50	10.8
Infant Mortality Rate („ „ live births) :	28.25	21.9	34.0

Population :—There is a small decrease of 130 persons since last year, but the population is 443 above that of the previous year. These fluctuations are largely due to changes in the numbers in the Farndon Road Camp.

Death Rate :—Is approximately the same as the previous two years and is under the average.

Birth Rate :—Is slightly below that of last year and remains a little below the average for England and Wales.

Infant Mortality Rate :—As there was one more death under this heading the rate has gone up, but it is still below that of the country as a whole.

Puerperal Fever :—There were no deaths from puerperal causes.

Causes of Death :—The principal causes of death were :—

Cancer	...	...	...	...	...	15
Cerebral Haemorrhage	...	...	...	...	...	10
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	36
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	7
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	2
Road accidents	...	...	...	...	...	1

There were no deaths from other infectious diseases or infantile diarrhoea.

HEALTH SERVICES.

Laboratory Facilities :—The following examinations were carried out at the public Health Laboratories of the Leicestershire County Council :—

Milk Examinations (Bacteriological and Phosphatase Test)	...	...	...	...	...	106
Blood Counts, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sewage and Water Analyses	...	...	...	...	...	41
Sputa for T.B.	...	...	...	...	...	4
Swabs for Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	6
Faeces and Urine	...	...	...	...	...	5
Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	...	36

On 5th July, 1948, the appointed day on which the National Health Service Act 1946 came into operation, the Leicestershire County Council became the Health Authority. The following services passed to the administrative care of their Medical Officer of Health and ceased to be the responsibility of your Council on that date.

Day Nursery.

District Midwifery and Home Nursing.

Anti-natal Clinics.

Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic.

Services of Health Visitor.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The Ambulance Service was also taken over by the Health Authority.

The administration of the Market Harborough and District Hospital and St. Lukes Hospital was transferred to the Sheffield Regional Hospital Board.

In consequence of these changes, the report on these services applies to only the first half of the year. I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks and appreciation to the officers transferred with these services for their loyalty, efficiency and devotion to their duty while in your employment. In this case I feel sure I am also expressing the feelings of your Council.

Day Nursery :—Continued to function efficiently. The average daily attendance was 34 with accommodation for 48 children.

Ambulance Services :—No alteration, infectious cases were promptly removed by the County Council Ambulances. All other cases were dealt with by the Market Harborough Division of St. John's Ambulance Brigade with their usual efficiency.

Home Nursing :—One District Nurse-Midwife employed by the Market Harborough and District Hospital (subsidised by your Council). She attended 28 domiciliary confinements and paid 415 sick visits during the half-year.

Centres and Clinics :—There are no treatment clinics in the town. Anti-natal Clinics were held weekly in the Maternity Section of the Market Harborough and District Hospital at St. Lukes Hospital and by the District Nurse at the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre. These Clinics were also attended by the doctors, and all maternity cases received regular anti-natal care.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Centre under the care of a Voluntary Committee of Ladies and the Health Visitor, again provided an excellent service and was well attended. All children under 5 years were regularly visited by the Health Visitor at their homes.

Hospitals :—The Market Harborough and District Hospital was a voluntary hospital subsidised by your Council. It provides 18 beds and a Maternity Block of 15 beds and has up-to-date X ray and physio-therapy departments.

St. Lukes Hospital has accommodation for 50 patients. Both hospitals provided very good service although much hampered by shortage of nursing staff.

Diphtheria Immunisation :—Immunisation was provided free of charge by your Council for all children at the M. & C. W. Centre and the doctors' surgeries. 62 children were immunised during the half-year.

Health Services Officers :—

- 1 Medical Officer of Health (Part-time).
- 1 Sanitary Inspector (Whole-time).
- 1 Health Visitor (Whole-time). Transferred to Leicestershire County Council Health Department on 5th July, 1948.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water :—The public supply has been satisfactory in quality and no shortage has been experienced during the year. The water is not liable to have plumbo-solvent action. Thirty-six samples of raw water from the piped supply were bacteriologically examined, and ten of these proved to be unsatisfactory and were confined to two occasions. The first group of samples was from individual wells after heavy rains, but samples from the mains were clear, showing that chlorination at the balancing tank had been effective. The second case concerned one well, and it was found that water from flooding of the adjoining land had gained access without sufficient natural horizontal filtration. The stream bed has since been cleaned out and deepened to avoid further flooding.

A copy of the report of the Leicestershire County Council, dated 2nd December, 1948, regarding the last sample from the town main, is appended :—

“No evidence of coliform organisms and a plate count was sterile.”

There have been no extensions of public water supplies during the year. The Scheme for additional water, and the central treatment and control of existing and proposed works is nearing completion and is expected to be submitted for Ministry consideration early in 1949.

The present supply to dwelling-houses in the district is as follows :—

	Houses.	Population.
Number supplied from wells	48	159
Number supplied from public water mains :—		
(a) Direct to the houses	2,868	9,536
(b) By means of stand-pipes	194	645

Twenty-one samples of water from private wells were examined for the presence of pollution, and one well was found to be unsatisfactory. Advice was given regarding precautions to be observed, and an investigation into the cause is being made and further samples will be taken.

Drainage and Sewerage :—There have been no extensions of drainage and sewerage systems during the year. Proposals for an additional outfall sewer and the reconstruction of the disposal works are awaiting the opportunity to proceed when more urgent public works have been dealt with.

Closet Accommodation :—Seventy-eight new water closets have been constructed and connected to the public sewerage system and the total in the district now numbers approximately 4,333. Twenty premises are situated at remote points outside the sewered areas and these properties are provided with sanitary accommodation of the conservancy type.

Public Cleansing :—All houses and other premises are provided with regulation dustbins for the storage of refuse, and regular attention is given to the replacement of worn out bins. 214 new dustbins were provided by owners of properties in compliance with notices from the Health Department. A weekly collection of domestic refuse and salvage materials is in operation by direct labour, and S.D. freighter motor vehicles are used for the purpose. During the year, 3,064 tons of refuse were dealt with at the Council's

Destructor Depot, of which the following quantities were salvaged :—

	Tons.	Cwts.
Paper	47	7
Metals	60	11
Textiles	14	18
Bottles and Jars	1	4
Bones	7	1
	<hr/> 131	<hr/> 1

The collections, although slightly lower than the previous year, have been well maintained.

A weekly collection of trade refuse is undertaken from 55 shops at payments in accordance with the Council's Scale of Charges.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Complaints received and investigated	236
Defects or nuisances dealt with	678
Informal Notices served	370
Statutory Notices served	2

Inspections :—

	1st. Visits.	2nd. Visits.
Animal Keeping	37	9
Bakehouses	4	1
Dairies and Cowsheds	14	71
Dwelling Houses	457	540
Factories, etc.	63	25
Food Premises	76	135
Offensive Trades	2	19
Rats and Mice Destruction	3,997	1,380
Shops	7	10
Slaughter House and Meat Inspection	1	294
Tents, Vans, Sheds, etc.	10	9
Verminous Premises	90	99
Water supplies	22	2
Other Premises	112	166
	<hr/> 4,892	<hr/> 2,760

Dwelling Houses :—

General structural repairs effected	35
Drains and sanitary fittings repaired and new provided	60
Dustbins provided	214
Cleansing and other defects remedied	27
Licences renewed under Defence Regulation 68AA	2

Factories, etc. :—

Sanitary accommodation provided or improved ...	5
Drainage and other defects remedied	6
Certificates issued in respect of means of escape in case of fire	2

Shops :—

Sanitary conveniences, drainage and other defects rectified	4
---	---

Miscellaneous Nuisances :—

Dangerous structures made safe	5
Drains and sanitary fittings tested	4
Drains repaired or unstopped	7
Noxious effluvia abated	3
Pollution of stream remedied	1
Offensive accumulations removed	16
Van Dwellers : Contraventions rectified	4
Other defects remedied	4

*Keeping of Animals :—*Owing to the increase in the demand for keeping pigs, sites were inspected and advice given in 22 instances regarding the construction of new pigsties, with a view to the prevention of nuisances arising. One nuisance was abated at an existing pigsty.

*Public Mortuary :—*The building in King's Road, which was specially constructed for this purpose, has been in use on seven occasions during the year. Regular attention to cleansing and maintenance is given by the Disinfecting Officer.

*Smoke Abatement :—*In March, the Council became a Member of the National Smoke Abatement Society, and agreed to participate in the scheme for a "National Survey of the Sources and Incidence of Atmospheric Pollution" organised by the Society. A survey of the boiler etc. plants in the district therefore was conducted during April and May, and the following information obtained :—

Number of boilers and furnaces burning solid or liquid fuel (other than gas) inspected :—

High pressure steam boilers	30
Low pressure water boilers	18
Metallurgical furnaces (oil fired)	2
Refuse destructor furnaces	3

The steam boilers consisted of the following types :— Lancashire 8, Cornish 5, Locomotive 2, Marine 1, and Vertical 14. The fuels used were :—Coal 11, coal and wood waste 4, coal and coke breeze 4, coke 7, wood and other waste 3, oil 1. Three boilers were mechanically fired and the remainder hand fired.

Six instances of excessive smoke emission from steam boiler plants were found to exist, and four of these used coal fuel and two trade waste materials. With the co-operation of the firms concerned, the Council placed the matter in the hands of the Fuel Efficiency Branch of the Ministry of Fuel and Power who sent their engineer and stoker-demonstrator to conduct a test on each of these boiler installations and advise upon firing methods, equipment and fuel. As a result three of the cases showed considerable improvement, one showed slight improvement, and in the remaining two cases, structural alterations and fuel supply were under consideration.

During the year the following work was carried out :

Complaints of smoke nuisances investigated	...	...	8
Observations of chimney emissions	...	...	29
Visits to boiler etc. plants	...	...	46
Nuisances abated	...	...	5
Cases referred to Ministry of Fuel and Power	...	...	6

With regard to smoke emission from domestic chimneys, the increased use of gas, electricity and smokeless fuel and the provision of more up-to-date grates and stoves for burning coal will in course of time tend to reduce the atmospheric pollution from houses and other domestic buildings.

Disinfection and Disinfestation :—

Infected rooms fumigated	...	...	153
Verminous rooms treated	...	...	170
Articles of bedding, clothing, etc. :—			
Steam disinfected	...	...	388
Destroyed	...	...	40
Other articles disinfected	...	...	17
Verminous person cleansed	...	...	1

Number of instances of bug infestation :—

Council Houses	...	...	0
Other Houses	...	...	2

Other infestations of domestic insect pests treated :—

[illegible]

Liquid pressure sprays, powders and fumigants containing D.D.T. or Gammexane have again been successful in destroying these pests.

Rats and Mice Destruction :—

For the third successive year, a systematic inspection of the district has been carried out by the Council's Rats Officer, who is also the Disinfecting Officer. His report again indicates a further general improvement in the situation, both in the reduction of the rodent population and the cleaning up and ratproofing of old infested buildings and trade premises especially attractive to rats.

A complete treatment of the sewerage system was again carried out with further beneficial results as the following details show by comparison with previous years :—

Year.	Number of Manholes baited	Number of manholes where takes of pre-bait were recorded.
1945	349	59
1946	350	27
1947	369	13
1948	375	8

An abbreviated summary of the work accomplished during the year is appended :—

Premises visited	... ..	3,997
Repeat visits	... ..	1,380
Infestations dealt with :—Rats 120, Mice 54	... ..	174
(1) At Council properties	... ..	22
(2) At Private dwellings (free of charge)	... ..	104
(3) At Business premises (occupiers charged)	... ..	48
Estimated number of rats killed (Ministry Formula)		1,374
Dead bodies recovered :—Rats 151, Mice 339	... ..	490

Special Classes of Premises and Occupations subject to Control :—

Written consent to establishment of trade of Rag and Bone Dealer renewed	1
Written consent to establishment of trades of Fat Extractor, Fat Melter and Glue Maker renewed ...	1
Regular inspections were carried out, and the conditions of the premises and conduct of the trades were usually found to be satisfactory. The attention of the firms concerned was drawn to three matters, and these were promptly rectified.	

Petrol and Carbide Stores :—

	Petroleum Spirit.	Carbide of Calcium.
Number of Licences issued	2	0
Number of Licences renewed	32	1
Number of Licences transferred ...	0	0
Number of contraventions rectified	8	0

Swimming Bath :—

There is one swimming pool in the district and this consists of a well equipped indoor swimming bath owned by the Council. Bathing facilities were available during the Summer months and were well patronised by members of the general public, schools, clubs and other parties. The water is treated by continuous circulation through an efficient filtration, chlorination and aeration plant, and the Baths Manager has conducted daily tests for chlorine content. One sample of the water was examined bacteriologically and was reported as being free from contamination.

HOUSING.

During the year, forty-seven houses have been erected as follows :—

	Council.	Private Enterprise.
Prefabricated—temporary	0	0
Prefabricated—permanent	0	0
Permanent construction	19	28

The total number of Post War Houses completed is 139.

In addition, alterations and conversions of five premises resulted in the provision of nine additional flats.

At the close of the year, seventy-seven permanent houses were in course of construction, *viz.* 62 by the Council and 15 by private enterprise.

The total applicants for Council houses numbers some 400, half of whom are living in rooms.

At the present time, chief attention is concentrated upon the urgency of providing new houses, and consequently many old houses are falling into a serious state of decay and disrepair. This aspect of the housing problem will need consideration as soon as the need for new houses has been met.

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—

(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	128
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	163
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932	0
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	0
(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	0
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	44

2.—Remedy of defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	36
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3.—Action under Statutory Powers 0

4.—Housing Acts, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding.

(1) (a)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of year	13
(b)	Number of families dwelling therein ...	19
(c)	Number of persons dwelling therein ...	98
(2)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	21
(3) (a)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	19
(b)	Number of persons concerned in such cases	151

(4) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	0
(5) Number of cases where sleeping accommodation is unsatisfactory although dwellings are not legally overcrowded	100

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply :—

	Trade.	No. on Register.
Cowkeepers		7
Dairymen and Purveyors of Milk (other than Cowkeepers)		4
Farms and other premises		17

The following Licences have been issued under the Milk (Special Designations) Orders 1936 and 1941 :—

“Tuberculin Tested”—Dealer’s Bottling	2
do. —Dealer’s	2
“Pasteurised” (plants)	2
do. Dealer’s	1
do. Supplementary (Retailing)	1

Milk Sampling :—

Class.	Number of Samples for bacteriological examination.	Number Satisfactory.	Number Unsatisfactory.
“Tuberculin Tested”	10	10	0
“Accredited”	7	6	1
“Pasteurised”	28	25	3
“Ordinary”	4	4	0
	—	—	—
Totals	49	45	4
	—	—	—

The pasteurising plant reported upon last year as being in need of replacement, has continued in operation, and despite further breakdowns, there have been only two unsatisfactory samples out of twenty-one collected from this source, as compared with eight samples below standard last year. This improvement reflects great credit upon those responsible for the operation of the plant in difficult circumstances. In the meantime, a licence has been granted for the erection of the new building to house the new plant, and the work of construction has commenced.

The other two unsatisfactory samples were of milk received from the outside area, and reports were sent to the firms concerned requesting an investigation into the cause with a view to an improvement being effected. Subsequent samples have been up to standard.

Eighty-five visits of inspection were made to premises where milk is produced, treated or stored for sale, and the following defects were rectified :—

Cleansing	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Structural Alterations	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Equipment and Apparatus	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Other items	...	...	...	...	...	...	2

Ice Cream :—

Trade.	Number of Premises Registered.					
Manufacture and retail	2
Manufacture only	1
Retail only	9

Thirty-six samples of ice cream were submitted to the County Laboratory for examination by the Methylene Blue Test and the reports are shown in comparison with the previous year as follows :—

					1947	1948
Grade 1	...	...	...	...	12	19
„ 2	...	...	...	...	2	12
„ 3	...	...	...	...	2	5
„ 4	...	...	...	...	5	0
					—	—
				Totals	21	36
					—	—

The new standard relating to the manufacture, storage and sale of ice cream, drawn up by the County District Sanitary Inspectors of Leicestershire, has been adopted by the Council.

Forty-one inspections of premises and vehicles have been carried out and advice given where necessary. Improvement has taken place in the construction of vehicles and barrows, and new manufacturing and refrigerating equipment has been installed in two instances.

Meat and other Foods :—

Centralised slaughtering under the control of the Ministry of Food was continued during the year in the Council's Abattoir, Springfield Street, and these premises served as the distributing centre for the supply of meat to the town and adjoining Rural Districts. During the year, 5,445 animals were slaughtered in this establishment, and all of the carcasses and organs were subjected to routine inspection before allocation for retail sale. The total weight of meat condemned as unfit for human consumption was 14 tons 13 cwts. 2 qrs. 3 lbs., and necessitated the issue of 151 certificates. One Licence to Slaughter was renewed.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed and inspected	807	162	569	3,817	90
All diseases except Tuberculosis :—					
Whole carcasses condemned	7	7	5	82	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	225	47	5	278	24
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	28.7	33.3	1.7	9.4	26.6
Tuberculosis only :—					
Whole carcasses condemned	4	9	1	—	2
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	95	36	—	—	7
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	12.3	27.7	0.2	—	10.0

Eighty-four requests to investigate doubtful or damaged miscellaneous foodstuffs (other than meat) were complied with, and it was found necessary to condemn as unfit for human food a total quantity of 4,046 lbs. 7½ ozs., for which 153 certificates were issued. Portions of this amount, where suitable, were utilised for salvage purposes in accordance with the directions of the Ministry of Food. Towards the close of the year, proceedings are pending in conjunction with the Ministry of Food respecting the alleged sale of unfit meat.

Defects remedied at food premises :—

Structural and drainage defects rectified	...	...	7
Refuse removed	...	...	2
Food exposed to contamination	...	...	2
Other defects remedied	...	...	5

In October, the Council adopted the Standard Code of Practice for Leicestershire, which had been drawn up by the County District Sanitary Inspectors and has for its object the promotion of improvement in the hygienic manufacture, handling and distribution of all classes of foodstuffs. It is intended to commence the operation of this Standard when adequate staff is available. In the meantime, advantage is being taken of opportunities that occur during alterations and improvements to existing premises, to comply with the new Standard.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifications :—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	47	Measles	...	...	31
Whooping Cough	...	...	17	Pneumonia	...	...	3
Diphtheria	...	...	0	Puerperal Fever	...	...	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	0	Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	0
Acute Polio-myelitis	...	...	0	Erysipelas	...	...	3

Deaths : 0

Tuberculosis :—

New Cases :—

	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
Male	6	1
Female	3	1
	—	—
	9	2
	—	—

Deaths :—

Male	4	—
Female	2	—
	—	—
	6	—
	—	—

Yours faithfully,

S. P. STOKER,

Medical Officer of Health.

B. G. ELLIOTT,

Sanitary Inspector.

